

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 1-9. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 1-9.

In the Office Action the Examiner objected to the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 25, 2002 along with the present application. It appears that the Examiner alleges that the Information Disclosure Statement did not provide a list of all references being cited. The February 25, 2002 Information Disclosure Statement did in fact include a list of all references being cited. Attached herewith is a Form PTO-1449 which lists the references cited by the February 25, 2002 Information Disclosure Statement. Also attached are copies of the references cited therein. Therefore, the Examiner's objection to the February 25, 2002 Information Disclosure Statement should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In the Office Action the Examiner alleges that the specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicants have reviewed the specification. However, no such minor errors were uncovered. The Examiner's cooperation is respectfully requested to identify any errors the Examiner may be aware of so that such errors can be immediately corrected to expedite prosecution of the present application. Therefore, the objection to the specification should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regards as their invention. Various amendments were made throughout claims 1-9 to bring them into conformity with the requirements of 35 USC

§112, second paragraph. Therefore, Applicants submit that this rejection is overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Noguchi (U.S. Patent No. 5,991,755). This rejection is traversed for the following reasons. Applicants submit that the features of the present invention as now recited in claims 1-9 not taught or suggested by Noguchi whether taken individually or in combination with any of the other references of record. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Amendments were made to the claims to more clearly describe features of the present invention. Particularly, amendments were made to the claims to more clearly recite that the present invention is directed to a similar document search method and system for searching for a document similar to a seeds document in a document database. According to the present invention, a first extracting step is provided for extracting at least one characteristic word from the seeds document including desired retrieval contents, a second extracting step is provided for extracting as a characteristic word of the seeds document, if the characteristic word extracted by the first extracting step is a compound characteristic word constructed by a plurality of constituent characteristic words, the compound characteristic word and the constituent characteristic words included in the compound characteristic word, a step of calculating is provided, for calculating, according to the characteristic word extracted by the second extracting step, similarity between the seeds document and a document stored in the document database by using the characteristic words including the compound characteristic and the constituent characteristic words by which the compound characteristic word is constructed, and

a step of outputting is provided for outputting a retrieval result as a result of the similarity calculated by the similarity calculating step.

Thus, as is clear from the above, the present invention provides for the searching or retrieval of not only a similar document including the compound characteristic word but also a similar document including the constituent characteristic words. These features of the present invention are not taught or suggested by any of the references of record whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by each other.

Particularly, the above described features of the present invention are not taught or suggested by Noguchi. Noguchi teaches a document retrieval system retrieving a necessary document. As taught by Noguchi, one or more important sentence structural functional units are extracted from an important portion of each of a plurality documents and one more input sentence structural functional units are extracted from an input sentence. According to Noguchi, the important sentence structural functional units of each document are correlated with the input sentence structural functional units to detect a matching degree and a similarity level is determined from the matching degree for each document. Thus, in Noguchi, the sentence structural functional units includes a plurality of words arranged in series such that each word included in the sentence structural functional unit may not be used as a key word.

The above described teachings of Noguchi differs entirely from that of the present invention as recited in the claims. Particularly, according to the present invention at a first step at least one characteristic word from the seeds document is extracted and at a second step a characteristic word of the seed document, if the

characteristic word is a compound characteristic word constructed by constituent characteristic words, a compound characteristic word and the constituent characteristic words included in the compound characteristic words.

According to the present invention a calculation is performed according to the characteristic words extracted by the extracting step of similarity between the seeds document and a document stored on the document database by using the characteristic words included in the compound characteristic word and the constituent characteristic words by which the compound characteristic word is constructed.

Thus, as is quite clear from the above, the features of the present invention as now more clearly recited in the claims not taught or suggested by Noguchi whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by any of the other references of record.

Noguchi fails to teach or suggest a first extracting step of extracting at least characteristic word from the seeds document including desired retrieval contents as recited in the claims.

Further, Noguchi fails to teach or suggest a second extracting step of extracting as a characteristic word of the seeds document, if the characteristic word extracted by the first extracting step is a compound characteristic word constructed by a plurality of constituent characteristic words, the compound characteristic word and the constituent characteristic word included in the compound characteristic word as recited in the claims.

Still further, Noguchi fails to teach or suggest a step of calculating, according to the characteristic words extracted by the second extracting step, similarity

between the seeds document and a document stored on the database by using the characteristic word including the compound characteristic words and the constituent characteristic words by which the compound characteristic word is constructed as recited in the claims.

Thus, as is quite clear from the above, the features of the present invention as recited in the claims not taught or suggested by Noguchi. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC §102(b) rejection of the claims as being anticipated by Noguchi is respectfully requested.

The remaining references of record have been studied. Applicants submit that they do not supply any of the deficiencies noted above with respect to the reference utilized in the rejection of claims 1-9.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1-9 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of the present application based on claims 1-9 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.41226X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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